

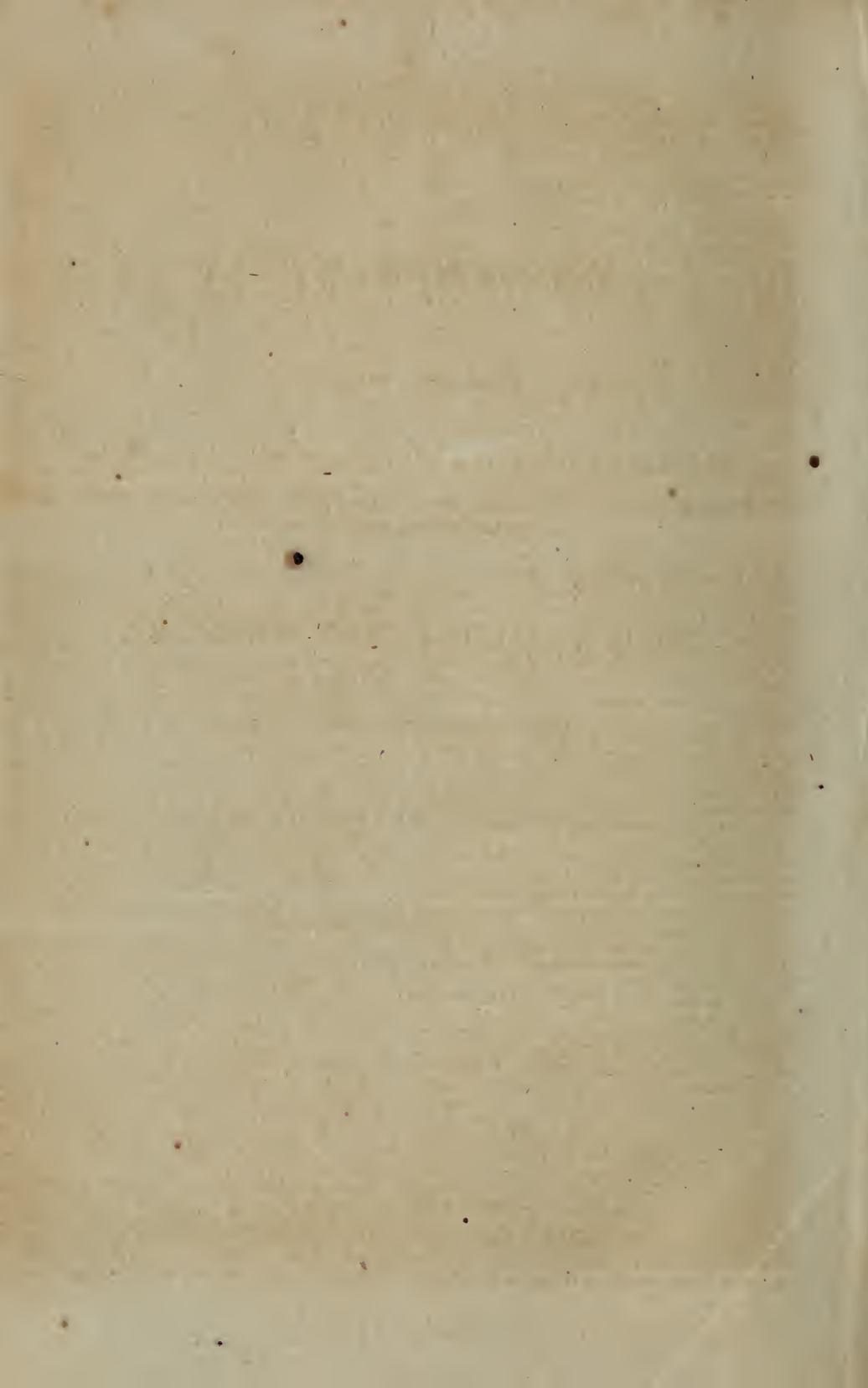
REPORT
OF
HON. LAWRENCE O'B. BRANCH,
FROM THE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
ON
THE ACQUISITION OF CUBA:

TO ACCOMPANY BILL H. R. NO. 678.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JANUARY 24, 1859.

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ACQUISITION OF CUBA.

Mr. BRANCH, *from the Committee on Foreign Affairs, proposes at a proper time to submit the following report:*

The Committee on Foreign Affairs, to whom were referred House bill, No. 678, "A bill appropriating money to enable the President to settle unadjusted differences with the Government of Spain, and for other purposes;" and also House bill, No. 684, "A bill authorizing the President to obtain a loan of money for a certain purpose;" have had the same under consideration, and now report:

At the close of their struggle with Great Britain for independence, the United States possessed no territory on the Gulf of Mexico, their southern boundary, being nearly coincident with the present northern boundary of Florida, extended to its intersection with the Mississippi river at 31° of north latitude.

The Mississippi river, then their western boundary, was far west of the extreme frontier settlements, and their productions being entirely east of the Alleghanies, commerce needed no ports except on the Atlantic seaboard.

In 1795, Spain held all the shores of the Gulf; but in 1800 ceded Louisiana, from the Perdido to the Sabine, to France.

After the close of the war of independence, our settlements spread westward, and the rich valley between the Alleghanies and the Mississippi soon received a hardy and enterprising population, under whose industry its fertile soil and unequaled resources were beginning to furnish material for an incalculable commerce. This commerce necessarily sought the ocean through the Mississippi, and as the mouth of the river was in possession, first, of Spain, and afterwards of France, jealousy and ill feeling were engendered between friendly nations, constantly threatening hostile collisions, against which the prudence of rulers could furnish no guarantee.

Napoleon Bonaparte, who was then at the head of the French nation, is known to have cherished no policy more ardently than that of building up

for France a commerce that should rival that of England; and though fully alive to the importance of Louisiana as a means toward accomplishing this object, he did not hesitate, in 1803, to cede it to us for the sake of preserving amicable relations between the two nations. He well knew that every consideration of justice demanded of him the cession, and that the pride and obstinacy of rulers ought not to stand in the way of the prosperity of large bodies of the human race. He also knew that however solicitous this Government might be to restrain its citizens from aggressions, it was not possible for it to do so under circumstances so well calculated to invite them. If Napoleon had been less a statesman, and had attempted to block up the mouth of the Mississippi, it cannot be doubted that long and bloody wars between France and the United States would have ensued, and that Louisiana would have been added to our Union at an enormous expense of blood and treasure.

By the acquisition of Louisiana, we became one of the Powers on the Gulf of Mexico, and by the subsequent purchase of Florida from Spain, and the annexation of Texas, we have become the paramount Power, having the unquestionable right to demand that, on its waters and around its borders, our peace and prosperity shall not be interrupted or endangered. Around it our social and political institutions prevail, and on it floats the commerce of fifteen States of the Confederacy. No other commerce worth mentioning is found there except ours, and we have a right to regard it, in all matters involving our security, as an inland sea.

Since the acquisition of California, passengers and mails in passing between the Atlantic and Pacific, seek a point of transit across the continent where it is narrower than at any point within our territorial limits. There are three points at which it may be conveniently traversed, each presenting

some advantage peculiar to itself. The first or most northerly is at the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, within the Republic of Mexico; the second in the Territory of Nicaragua; and the third at the Isthmus of Panama, in New Granada. It is important to us that all these routes should be kept open, as the competition between rival lines could not fail to be advantageous to our citizens. But the Tehuantepec route being within the Gulf of Mexico, we had a just right, as the predominant Power in the Gulf, to claim a free and exclusive right of way over it for our citizens, mails, and property, passing between the Atlantic and Pacific portions of the Union. The Government of Mexico, with a clear appreciation of its own interest, and a liberal sense of what was due to us, has authorized the construction of a railroad at this point, and by the treaty of the 30th of December, 1853, guaranteed to the United States the full and unrestricted right of transit. After it, with the privilege to "extend its protection as it shall judge wise to it when it may feel sanctioned and warranted by the public or international law," and with the further stipulation, "nor shall any interest in said transit way, nor in the proceeds thereof, be transferred to any foreign Government." By this liberal and enlightened course on the part of Mexico, we have been enabled to secure within the Gulf of Mexico a transit route as free, and in every respect as advantageous to us, as if it was within our own limits.

By securing the Tehuantepec transit right, we have diverted into the Gulf the coastwise intercourse between the Atlantic and Pacific, and thereby added incalculably to the large commercial interests we already have there.

It will be seen from this brief review that Spain, France, Texas, and Mexico, have voluntarily placed us in a position, territorially, on the Gulf, which has made it to us almost an inland sea. Having thus voluntarily, and for ample consideration, made its free use a necessity to us, can they justly withhold any additional concessions that experience has shown to be indispensable to our peace and security?

It is worthy of remark that Spain has at all times shown more reluctance to make amicable territorial arrangements with us than any other nation with whom we have been coterminous. Its pride seems only to have revolted against cessions to us, and to have prevented no obstacles to cessions to other Powers. Louisiana and Florida were time and again transferred and re-transferred between Spain, France, and England, so that it is almost as difficult to trace their history as it is to date the various transfers of a personal chattel. Yet, when Florida became indispensable to the security of the United States, and we proposed to purchase it, Spanish pride instantly revolted. Our Government so scrupulously respects the territorial rights of neighboring nations, and so honorably discharges all the duties of good neighborhood, that few persons are aware how sorely the patience and forbearance of the generation preceding ours was tried by the obstinacy of the Spanish rulers in regard to Florida. All efforts to purchase it having failed, Congress, in 1811

and 1813, in secret session, passed the following acts, which were not printed and promulgated until after the lapse of several years:

Resolution and acts relative to occupation of the Floridas by the United States of America.

Taking into view the peculiar situation of Spain and her American provinces, and considering the influence which the destiny of the territory adjoining the southern border of the United States may have upon their security, tranquility, and commerce: Therefore,

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the United States, under the peculiar circumstances of the existing crisis, cannot, without serious inquietude, see any part of the said territory pass into the hands of any foreign Power, and that a due regard to their own safety compels them to provide, under certain contingencies, for the temporary occupation of the said territory; they at the same time declare that the said territory shall, in their hands, remain subject to future negotiation.

Approved, January 15, 1811.

—
An act to enable the President of the United States, under certain contingencies, to take possession of the country lying east of the river Perdido and south of the State of Georgia and the Mississippi Territory, and for other purposes:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the President of the United States be, and he is hereby, authorized to take possession of and occupy all or any part of the territory lying east of the river Perdido and south of the State of Georgia and the Mississippi Territory, in case an arrangement has been or shall be made with the local authority of said territory for delivering up the possession of the same, or any part thereof, to the United States; or, in event of an attempt to occupy the said territory, or any part thereof, by any foreign Government; and he may, for the purpose of taking possession and occupying the territory aforesaid, and in order to maintain therein the authority of the United States, employ any part of the Army or Navy of the United States which may be necessary.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That \$100,000 be appropriated for defraying such expenses as the President may deem necessary for obtaining possession as aforesaid, and the security of the said territory, to be applied, under the direction of the President, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted,* That in case possession of the territory aforesaid shall be obtained by the United States, as aforesaid, that, until other provision be made by Congress, the President be, and he is hereby, authorized to establish, within the territory aforesaid, a temporary government; and the military, civil, and judicial powers thereof, shall be vested in such person and persons, and be exercised in such manner as he may direct, for the protection and maintenance of the inhabitants of the said territory, in the full enjoyment of their liberty, property, and religion.

Approved, January 15, 1811.

—
An act concerning an act to enable the President of the United States, under certain contingencies, to take possession of the country lying east of the river Perdido and south of the State of Georgia and the Mississippi Territory, and for other purposes, and the declaration accompanying the same.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this act and the act passed during the present session of Congress, entitled "An act to enable the President of the United States, under certain contingencies, to take possession of the country lying east of the river Perdido and south of the State of Georgia and the Mississippi Territory, and for other purposes," and the declaration accompanying the same, be not printed or published until the end of the next session of Congress, unless directed by the President of the United States; any law or usage to the contrary notwithstanding.

Approved, March 3, 1811.

An Act authorizing the President of the United States to take possession of a tract of country lying south of the Mississippi Territory, and west of the river Perdido.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the President be, and he is hereby, authorized to occupy and hold all that tract of country called West Florida, which lies west of the river Perdido, and now in possession of the United States.

Sec. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That, for the purpose of occupying and holding the country aforesaid, and of affording protection to the inhabitants thereof, under the authority of the United States, the President may employ such parts of the military and naval force of the United States as he may deem necessary.

Sec. 3. *And be it further enacted,* That, for defraying the necessary expenses, \$20,000 is hereby appropriated, out of any moneys in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, and be applied for that purpose under the direction of the President.

Approved, February 12, 1813.

Happily no necessity arose for the exercise by the President of the extraordinary powers conferred on him by these acts, and they became obsolete on the subsequent acquisition of Florida by the treaty of 22d of February, 1819.

It is a fact of some significance that these acts and resolutions were for the first time published and promulgated with the laws, pending the negotiation of the treaty for the cession of Florida.

Even after the treaty had been signed by the plenipotentiaries of the contracting parties, the Spanish Government withheld its ratification on frivolous pretenses until the 24th of October, 1820, nearly two years; and so completely had the patience and forbearance of our Government been exhausted, that President Monroe, in his annual message of December, 1819, brought the subject to the attention of Congress, and said:

"From a full view of all the circumstances, it is submitted to Congress whether it will not be proper for the United States to carry the conditions of the treaty into effect, in the same manner as if it had been ratified by Spain; claiming, on their part, all its advantages, and yielding to Spain those secured to her."

From these legislative and executive manifestations, immediately preceding and succeeding our last war with England, we might deduce an example which we do not follow, because we may now safely repose on the conviction that our power is adequate to our protection under any emergency.

Of the immense colonial possessions once held by Spain in this quarter of the globe, none remain under her authority except the islands of Cuba and Porto Rico. To her they are distant and expensive appendages, in no way connected with or participating in her Government, adding nothing to her power, and held solely for the advantages derivable to the mother country from a monopoly of their trade. Though the inhabitants of Cuba are probably more heavily taxed than any other population in the world—eight hundred thousand free persons, of whom two hundred thousand are free negroes, paying more than twenty-three million dollars per annum—yet Spain derives little or no advantage from the revenue, it being absorbed in the support of nearly twenty-five thousand peninsula troops and a numerous navy, on and around the island, to keep it in subjection. Whilst Spain held large colonies on the main land of the continent, especially whilst Mexico, Texas, Lou-

isiana, and Florida, were under its rule, Cuba was important to her as a commercial entrepot, and also as a military outpost from which were fitted out her expeditions to Mexico and Central and South America. Its importance in that respect seems to have been appreciated by her and recognized by other nations; for whilst Louisiana and Florida repeatedly changed sovereigns, Cuba never has, from the time the Spanish flag was planted upon it by Columbus, in 1492, except for a short time, during which Great Britain held it by conquest. Its value to Spain, in this respect, has entirely ceased, and it has become of even greater importance to us as her successors in Florida, Louisiana, and Texas. Our rights and obligations in reference to the Gulf and the nations lying around it, to which the committee has already adverted, demand that the Island of Cuba should constitute a State of our Confederacy, bound to us not only by a common Constitution, but by the bonds of mutual interest, and side by side with the sister States of the Union, aiding to place under our flag the richest and freest commerce the world has ever seen.

Its importance to our national security, and for the protection of our foreign and coastwise commerce, will be perceived from considerations which we will briefly present.

Into the Gulf of Mexico empty all the rivers of Texas, the Mississippi and its tributaries, all the rivers of Alabama, and a portion of those of Georgia and Florida, furnishing twenty-five thousand miles of inland navigation, and bearing towards the markets of the world the surplus productions of fifteen of the most fertile States in the Union. The trade of the ports in the Gulf may be set down at \$200,000,000 per annum, as follows:

Exports of domestic produce to foreign countries (official).....	\$113,541,367 00
Imports from foreign countries (official)...	19,703,870 00
Exports coastwise (estimated).....	20,000,000 00
Imports coastwise (estimated).....	47,000,000 00

No one can doubt that these figures are much lower than might be safely assumed, and that within a very few years the same trade will amount to \$500,000,000, independently of the trade with California over the Tehuantepec route, which baffles all computation.

The gulf into which all this trade is annually poured is in the form of a distended bag, its contracted mouth being presented towards the Atlantic ocean. All vessels going into or out of it must pass through this mouth; and just between the headlands of Florida and Yucatan, which form the mouth, is situated the island of Cuba. An enemy's fleet lying in its harbors, and cruising in the narrow straits which separate it from Florida on one side and Yucatan on the other, could effectually close the gates of the Gulf and lock in the whole trade of the valley of the Mississippi.

When France was in possession of Louisiana, the commerce of the Mississippi was little more at its mercy than it is now at the mercy of Spain and her allies. By our treaty of peace with Great Britain, in 1782, we were entitled to the free navigation of that river from its source to its mouth, and we could maintain our right so long as we had

a preponderance on land, although both banks, near the mouth, were in the hands of a foreign Power; but now we are secure only so long as we maintain a naval superiority over Spain and all the allies she may array against us. If the solicitude of our fathers to remove foreign Powers from the banks of the Mississippi, because they might interrupt its navigation, was well founded, it is amazing that there should not be greater solicitude on the part of their children to remove Spain from the mouth of the Gulf. Taking into account the growth of our western States and the vast increase of their productions, the acquisition of Cuba must be far more important to them now than that of Louisiana was in 1803.

Owing to adverse currents, intricate channels, and other causes controlling the movements of mariners, the majority of vessels navigating between the Gulf and the Atlantic seaboard pass to the southward of the Island of Cuba, and the island, therefore, bears the same relation to the track of our navigators that Florida would bear to it if they could pass to the north of the island. It is, practically, the salient point of the Florida peninsula; and, defensively, the Florida cape is of no more value to us than a position on the northern border of the Everglades, because there is a much stronger position in advance of it held adversely.

Nothing can be more irritating to an independent and spirited nation, or better calculated to precipitate collisions, than to have such vast and delicate interests as our most important coastwise intercourse compelled to pass almost within hail of foreign fortifications, and to run the gauntlet of alien fleets. Hence, our relations with Spain are constantly of a semi-hostile character, and our Minister at Madrid can do little else than wrangle with the Government to which he is accredited about high-handed outrages and petty grievances inflicted upon our citizens, which Spanish officials in Cuba are armed with full power to inflict, but none to redress.

The following list of unredressed cases, pending in 1854, resembles more the criminal docket of a county court than the portfolio of a minister plenipotentiary:

1. The bark Zulette.
2. Claim of the heirs of Alexander D. Harang.
3. The bark Godefroy.
4. Imprisonment of Mr. West.
5. Shipwreck of the North Carolina.
6. Prisoners taken at Contoy.
7. The Crescent City.
8. Schooner Manchester.
9. Firing, with ball, at the Black Warrior.
10. Seizure and detention of the Black Warrior.
11. A large number of claims arising out of the irregular repeal of an order admitting grain and timber free of duty.

12. Reclamations for port and navigation duties improperly exacted.

If some of these cases have been settled since 1854, others have been added to the docket; and it is not likely that it will be reduced whilst our present relations to the island are maintained.

If Long Island was in possession of a foreign

Power, and the morning gun from its bristling fortifications could be heard in our great commercial metropolis, would it not be the signal to battle? How long could a foreign flag float there, whether defended by twenty-five thousand or thrice twenty-five thousand troops? What Government here could keep the peace with the intruder? Our Government has kept the peace with Spain, and its ability to do so is proof of our scrupulous respect for the rights of others, and of the obedience of our western and southwestern citizens to law and the constituted authorities. It is well known that large bodies of men in the United States have been eager to assail the Spanish power in the West Indies, and have only been restrained by the stern mandates of their own Government. They have passed and repassed, in peace and in war; once, when returning flushed with victory, and armed with the weapons that wrested from Mexico indemnity for wrongs no greater than have been inflicted on us by Spain. More recently our squadrons have passed, to avenge on Paraguay an insult to the flag. Yet what has Paraguay done comparable to the insults that we have more than once received in Cuba?

Under any circumstances, the geographical position of Cuba would render it a source of annoyance and irritation to us; so long as it remains in the hands of a foreign Power; and it would constantly disturb our friendly relations with its possessor. But the Spanish Government has never seemed desirous to render it as little so as possible. It will neither guard against wrongs to us, nor redress them. The President says:

"Whilst the captain general of Cuba is invested with general despotic authority in the government of that island, the power is withheld from him to examine and redress wrongs committed by officials under his control on subjects of the United States. Instead of making our complaints directly to him at Havana, we are obliged to present them through our Minister at Madrid. These are then referred back to the captain general for information, and much time is thus consumed in preliminary investigations and correspondence between Madrid and Cuba, before the Spanish Government will consent to proceed to negotiation."

The committee entirely concur with the President in the following sentiments:

"It has been made known to the world by my predecessors that the United States have, on several occasions, endeavored to acquire Cuba from Spain, by honorable negotiations." * * * * "We would not, if we could, acquire Cuba in any other manner. This is due to our national character. All the territory which we have acquired since the origin of the Government, has been by fair purchase from France, Spain, and Mexico, or by the free and voluntary act of the independent State of Texas, in blending her destinies with our own. This course we shall ever pursue, unless circumstances should occur, which we do not now anticipate, rendering a departure from it clearly justifiable under the imperative and overruling law of self preservation."

The attempts to acquire it, alluded to by the President, have been made by the Executive without the express sanction of Congress, though it is not doubted that they have met its hearty approbation and that of the American people. Perhaps a proposition made with the express sanction of Congress may receive a more favorable consideration from the Spanish Government. Until such a proposition has been made and rejected, we ought not to consider "honorable negotiation"

exhausted, nor would it be proper to discuss what course would be demanded of us "under the imperative and overruling law of self-preservation." It is certain that the Executive will take, and Congress will sanction, no step which will not be sanctioned by the practices, if not by the public sentiment, of all civilized nations.

In addition to commercial privileges for a limited time in the ports of Cuba, similar to those granted to Spain in the ports of Florida, and to France in those of Louisiana, and even greater privileges if Spain should desire them, the United States could afford to pay an equivalent in money for the change of flags. It is true that the principal pecuniary gain from the acquisition would inure to those classes of our citizens engaged in commerce, navigation, and manufactures, on whom the taxation to pay the equivalent would fall with the least weight; but the producing classes also would be largely benefited, and it is not doubted that, in consideration of the political and commercial advantages to the whole nation, they would cheerfully bear their proportion of the burden.

No prospect of pecuniary gain could induce the people of the United States to sanction an act of wrong, and no arguments will ever be necessary to reconcile them to pay the cost of national security. But as the sum proposed to be appropriated is large, and the people under our Government demand, and have the right to receive, from the representative body full explanations as to every legislative act, it is our duty to lay before the House the information which has guided us in settling the amount of appropriation recommended.

The committee, therefore, present to the House statistical facts, drawn from official and reliable sources, showing the advantages which may be expected to result from the acquisition to the leading industrial interests of our country:

1. To the agricultural.
2. To the manufacturing.
3. To the navigation.
4. To the commercial.

Most of the facts are drawn from the official report of the "Commercial Relations of the United States with all Nations," prepared at the State Department and published by order of Congress, and where a due regard to brevity will permit, the language of that report will be adopted.

1. The advantage to our agricultural classes would be two-fold:

First. Of articles used mainly by them we imported from Cuba, in 1851, as follows: Molasses, \$3,051,156; sugar, \$15,555,409.

On these articles an export duty was collected by the Spanish Government of..... \$750,000
An import duty of twenty-four per cent. was collected by the United States..... 4,465,575
Tax on sugar imported from other countries, which would come from Cuba free..... 1,130,609

Total..... 6,346,184

But this does not exhibit the whole saving. So long as the domestic production of these articles

is less than the consumption, the import duty of twenty-four per cent. levied by this Government enables the domestic producer to exact twenty-four per cent. more than he could get if the foreign article was not enhanced in price by the duty. It is clear that if the duty was taken off, so that Cuban sugar and molasses could be bought twenty-four per cent. cheaper, the Louisiana produce would also be sold twenty-four per cent. cheaper, or not at all. This amounts to about eight million dollars per annum, on which twenty-four per cent. amounts to \$1,920,000, making an aggregate annual saving on sugar and molasses, mainly to the agricultural classes, of \$8,266,184. On the importation of 1857, the saving would have been over fifteen million dollars.

A superficial observer may say that this saving will constitute no real gain; because, if the Government is deprived of the revenue it now derives from sugar and molasses, it must levy an equal amount upon some other article consumed by the same class.

This view is by no means correct; for when our revenue system is extended over Cuba, its citizens will pay into the Treasury an amount averaging, under our present tariff, about twenty per cent. on all their foreign importations. It is not possible to estimate what this may be.

Second. By opening the island to the introduction of our agricultural productions free of duty, the acquisition would furnish to that class a large and most important market for their surplus.

Breadstuffs, and provisions generally, of which we raise so bountiful a supply, are produced to a very small extent in Cuba; and yet, owing to the discriminating duties and onerous charges and restrictions imposed by the Spanish Government, we are unable to supply our nearest neighbors what we have in such superabundance, and they so much need.

"The duty in Cuba on flour imported from Spain is \$2 50; on that imported from the United States in American or other foreign bottoms it is \$10 81, the effect of which is to drive the American article entirely from the Cuban market, except at such times as when scarcity may have carried it up to a famine point.

"Were the discriminations removed, flour would unquestionably become our leading staple export to Cuba.

"The most moderate estimate places the consumption of flour, were it admitted at reasonable duties, at from eight to nine hundred thousand barrels. That this trade would be enjoyed almost exclusively by the United States is evident from the fact that flour is amongst our heaviest articles of export, and European competition with a country within a few days' sail of the island would be out of the question."—*Com. Rel.*, vol. 1, p. 162.

From the single article of flour, the agriculturists of this country would realize at least five million dollars per annum. At present, they sell none to Cuba.

"Lard, an article of great consumption in Cuba, imported almost exclusively from the United States, is subject to a duty of four and a half cents per pound, when brought from this country in American bottoms; the coarser qualities of oil (olive,) which are imported for the same purposes, are delivered with a duty of two and four fifths cents per pound; and the result is that 10,000,000 pounds of lard, being a vastly superior article, are imported, while 8,000,000 pounds of oil from other countries, far inferior to lard, are enabled to

compete with it in the markets of Cuba, because of the difference in price in its favor produced by the duty."—*Com. Rel.*, vol. 1, p. 183.

"Meats.—The existence of a differential duty on meats imported in Spanish bottoms draws the supply of this article in the markets of Cuba from Buenos Ayres to the extent of 30,000,000 pounds annually; while from the United States it comes to a very limited extent, notwithstanding the quality of the article imported from the United States is far superior to that from South America."—*Ib.*, p. 183.

The removal of the discriminating duties referred to would open a market for 38,500,000 pounds of our meats and lard, without adding anything for the increased consumption which may be expected to result from the superior quality and cheaper price of the article we would furnish. At ten cents per pound, this would give to our agriculturists \$3,800,000, where now they get nothing.

Similar statements might be made in reference to Indian corn, rice, and other articles of food, of which our farmers produce a large surplus, much of which is wastefully consumed because there is no accessible market for its sale, and all of which is reduced in value because the demand is unequal to the supply in those markets which are accessible.

In 1854, the island imported articles of subsistence to the value of \$19,000,000, all of which, under free trade, would be furnished by us.

Enough has been stated from official sources alone, without exaggeration, and without additions which might be legitimately made, to show that the acquisition of the island would promote, in a wonderful degree, the prosperity of our agricultural classes. The sugar planters of Louisiana might find their profits somewhat curtailed. But it must not be forgotten that the first attempts to produce sugar in Louisiana resulted in such signal failures that the business was abandoned, and for a great many years the soil and climate were regarded as altogether unsuited to its production. Circumstances having caused a renewal of the attempt, perseverance and skill finally established it as a lucrative and apparently a permanent business. But of late years serious apprehensions have been entertained that it is about to be blighted again, and that, perhaps, in a very few years, our whole supply of sugar from that source may be cut off by uncontrollable natural causes. Fortunately, the soil and climate are well adapted to the production of cotton, and the most serious disaster that can befall the planter is the necessity of transferring his capital from the production of sugar to that of cotton.

Congress has always manifested a great desire that we should be independent of foreign nations for our supply of sugar; and, with a view to protect and foster the production of it at home, heavy duties have been imposed on the foreign article. Although the consumers have borne this heavy burden for many years, the increase of production has not kept pace with the increase of consumption. The amount produced at home has scarcely, in any one year, equaled half the consumption; while, in 1855, it was barely a third; in 1856, only a tenth; 1857, about an eighth.

Table compiled from statistics contained in *Homans's Cyclo-pædia of Commerce*.

Year.	SUGAR.	
	Total produced in Louisiana.	Total consumed in United States.
	Pounds.	Pounds.
1850.....	231,194,000	435,736,629
1853.....	495,156,000	927,424,644
1854.....	385,726,000	863,067,520
1855.....	254,569,000	671,427,000
1856.....	81,373,000	848,422,400
1857.....	87,360,000	628,913,600

The importation for the year 1853 was 519,036,256 pounds. No means are at hand for ascertaining the production in Louisiana.

Homans's table has been compared with Champonier's report, and no variance is found prejudicial to Louisiana.

These facts and figures show conclusively (and none more regret it than the committee) that Louisiana cannot supply our wants, and must prepare for the free importation of sugar from other quarters; as it cannot be supposed that the consumers—our entire population—will consent to be taxed much longer on an article of universal consumption, and almost a necessary of life, for a purpose which it is obvious cannot be accomplished. The only feasible plan for the attainment of so long cherished an object—independence of foreign countries for our sugar—is by the introduction of Cuba into the Union. Louisiana has on all occasions shown a patriotic devotion to the interest of the whole Union, and having had the liberal aid of the Government towards the development of her full sugar-producing capacity, will no doubt surrender it without a murmur, when it is certain that she has not the capacity to supply the demand; and that the protection she enjoys is simply a tax of twenty-four per cent. on the whole sugar consumption of the Union, for the benefit of her few sugar planters.

2. The benefits to the manufacturers. No nation in Europe has clung with so much pertinacity to the self-aggrandizing colonial policy as Spain. Others have sometimes relaxed their colonial restrictions when relaxation seemed necessary to the maintenance of their dominion. Spain, on the contrary, has lost her whole colonial empire except Cuba and Porto Rico, because her pride revolted at any concessions. While she held sway over almost all the gold and silver mines in the world, she vainly strove to dry up the life-blood of the wealth of the world, and to prevent its diffusion beyond her own borders by prohibiting the exportation of the precious metals. Such absurd folly was only not mischievous because it was impotent.

An official publication says:

"The restrictive policy of Spain, especially as regards the trade of her colonies, is adhered to, to day, in Cuba and Porto Rico, almost as rigorously as when she was mistress of nearly the entire southern portion of this continent." *

* * * "Until the system itself is abolished, and Spain adopts the more liberal commercial policy which characterizes the present enlightened age—until she follows the example of Great Britain, Belgium, Holland, and other neighboring countries, in removing all unnecessary shackles from commercial enterprise—the commerce of Cuba, not only with the mother country, but with the United States and all foreign nations, must remain as it has during the past quarter of a century, crippled, restricted, and struggling."

* * * * "The last tariff for imports and exports of the Island of Cuba commenced to be enforced in 1847. Foreign merchandise, in foreign bottoms, pays some twenty-seven and one half per cent.; others thirty-three and one half per cent.; foreign merchandise, in Spanish bottoms from foreign ports, some nineteen and one half per cent., others twenty-three and one half per cent. The same rates of nineteen and one half per cent., and twenty-three and one half per cent., are levied upon foreign merchandise coming from the peninsula in Spanish bottoms. Spanish goods coming in foreign vessels, pay some fourteen and one half per cent., others seventeen and one half per cent. All Spanish productions and manufactures (except jewelry) that come in Spanish vessels pay seven and one half per cent. An additional three per cent. has been laid on since this tariff went into operation."—*Com. Rel.*, vol. 3, p. 426.

A careful inspection of the tariff, in detail, has been made, and it was found that almost all the more important productions of this country are charged the highest rate—thirty-six and a half per cent.—and discriminations are made against us by our valuations.

It is wonderful that our manufacturers should be able to send any of their fabrics to the island in the face of such impositions and discriminations. Whether they are or not, and to what extent, are not known, but it is believed that the amount is very limited. The importation of manufactured articles into the island from all quarters, in 1854, amounted to about twelve million three hundred thousand dollars. This amount certainly would be secured to them by a change which would enable them to introduce their goods free, whilst all others were charged our regular tariff rates. As, however, the population of the island is exclusively agricultural, and is increasing rapidly, both in numbers and in wealth, a largely increased demand might be looked for, especially under a more liberal system of commercial exchanges; and Cuba would probably prove to be their most valuable customer, taking millions of their fabrics, and threatening no rivalry. Whilst this would be profitable to the manufacturers, it would be eminently beneficial, in a national point of view, as aiding to settle the heavy balance of trade against us in our intercourse with the island.

In 1853, we imported from it.....\$27,214,846
Whilst we exported to it only.....14,433,167

Leaving a balance of.....\$12,781,679

Perhaps there is no more appropriate connection in which to state that, in 1852, when our trade with Cuba was considerably less than half what it was in 1853, the Spanish Government collected from it \$3,338,120 of revenue. At the same rate it levied on our trade of 1853, \$7,600,000. What increase might we not expect in our trade when relieved of such an imposition? Its ability to exist under it at all is proof that, if free, it would be susceptible of almost indefinite extension.

3. Benefits to the navigation interest. The devices adopted to exclude foreign shipping from engaging profitably in the carrying trade of the island are vexatious and oppressive in the extreme.

The differential duties in favor of trade under the Spanish flag, and against their flags of other nations, are exhibited in all the extracts we have

already made from their tariff. The same policy is adopted not only in regard to all imports, but also in their export regulations.

Superadded to these are a multitude of port charges and dues, in all which heavy discrimination is made in favor of Spanish vessels. For nearly thirty years this Government has been endeavoring, by negotiation and by retaliatory legislation, to induce a relaxation in favor of our shipping; but its efforts have not been attended with the least measure of success. Our Minister at Madrid wrote to Mr. Marcy in 1853:

"Since my reception at court, I have had several interviews with M. Calderon. I find him ill inclined to favor any policy that might tend to bring Spain to a closer connection with the United States. He sets no great value on the advantages which his countrymen might derive from a free intercourse with us, and views rather as danger whatever is likely to promote it."

This is probably the general feeling of Spanish politicians, at least of the old school, and it is futile to aim at any advantages for our citizens, in the Island of Cuba, so long as it remains subject to Spanish law.

The discriminations against our shipping can be better appreciated from their effects than from an enumeration of them in detail.

The total commerce of Cuba, import and export, for the year 1854, according to its custom-house returns, which are said to be twenty-five per cent. under the truth, was \$64,078,309, employing 3,812 vessels of about one million tons. From the proximity of the seat of this trade, and the nature of the exchanges between Cuba and other countries, our ship-owners ought to enjoy the carriage of nearly or quite the whole of it. In the absence of discriminations against them, their superior skill and enterprise would enable them to secure its monopoly.

The following table will show how far the repressive energy of Spanish legislation has driven their sails from their own doors to seek employment in distant quarters of the globe.

Let the mariner, when he lies paralyzed and shivering in the frozen seas of northern Europe, or floats lazily on the yellow waters of Asia, where everything around him bespeaks man and nature dormant and stationary, turn his thoughts to the soft atmosphere and rich vegetation of the tropics. There he will see the Spanish sailor—the petrified semblance of the bold mariners of the same nation who discovered this continent—protected by a bulwark of legislation to keep off intruders, enjoying without merit the prize which ought to be the reward of skill and enterprise.

Number of vessels entering the ports of Cuba from 1848 to 1854.

	1848.	1849.	1850.	1851.	1852.	1853.	1854.
Total.....	3,548	3,213	3,356	3,869	3,612	3,913	3,812
United States.....	1,733	1,639	1,596	2,014	1,886	2,307	2,133
	<u>1,815</u>	<u>1,574</u>	<u>1,760</u>	<u>1,855</u>	<u>1,726</u>	<u>1,611</u>	<u>1,682</u>

The trade of the island and the tonnage employed are greater now than they were four years ago; but no official returns are at hand of a later date than those given. It appears that our shipping is superseded by foreign, principally Span-

ish, to the extent of about five hundred thousand tons per annum. In this statement no account is taken of the shipping employed in the coasting trade. We have no data on which to base even an estimate of this; but it must be very large in an island having many good harbors and more than fifteen hundred miles of sea-coast.

4. The benefits to the commercial classes. This branch of the subject is susceptible of being presented in so many points of view that the length to which it is desirable to restrict this report will not allow of anything more than the presentation of facts drawn from official sources, from which each inquirer may form for himself an estimate of the productiveness and commercial capabilities of the island. The committee feels less reluctance to pursue this course, because the intelligence and sagacity that have always characterized our commercial classes are a guarantee that they need no aid to enable them to draw reliable deductions from known facts, and no prompting to induce them to extend, by every honorable means, the field in which they may display enlightened and liberal enterprise.

"Its great fertility of soil, its genial climate, its almost limitless resources, its commercial wealth, and its geographical position, render the Island of Cuba the most important, as it is the largest, of the Antilles.

"It comprises an area of 31,468 square miles, (30,139,520 acres—about the size of all the New England States except Maine.)

"The census of 1775 gave a population of 170,370; that of 1817, of 551,998; that of 1841, of 1,007,624; and that of 1850, of 1,247,230, of which last 605,656 persons were whites, 205,570 free colored, and 436,100 slaves. The portion of the island under cultivation does not exceed two million acres, (less than one fifteenth part,) but most abundant crops of maize, yams, bananas, potatoes, sugar, coffee, tobacco, and, to a limited extent, of cotton, cocoa, and indigo, are produced."—*Com. Rel.*, vol. 1, p. 177.

"The amount of raw sugar, as a gross product to the acre in several countries of the globe, from good authority, is as follows:

	Pounds.
Mauritius.....	6,000
Brazil.....	5,000
Cuba.....	4,000
Isle of Bourbon.....	3,300
Guadaloupe.....	2,900
Vera Cruz.....	1,900
Martinique.....	1,700
Bengal.....	1,600
St. Domingo.....	1,100
Louisiana.....	1,000

—[*Homans' Cyclopaedia of Commerce*, 1700.

Cuban sugar is preferred to all others in the markets of the world, and the only two countries that exceed it in production to the acre raise a comparatively small amount in the aggregate.

An intelligent historian, resident in the United States, says:

"Cuba has been justly styled the garden of the world; perpetual summer smiling upon its favored shores, and its natural wealth almost baffling the capacity of estimation. It is scarcely credible that, when the generous soil produces from two to three crops annually, the vegetable wealth of this island should be so poorly developed. It is capable of supporting a population of almost any density, and yet the largest estimate gives only a million and a half of inhabitants. Nowhere on the face of the globe would intelligent labor meet with a richer reward; nowhere on the face of the globe would repose from labor be so sweet. Cuba is, indeed, a land of enchantment, where nature is beautiful, and where mere existence is a luxury; but it requires the infusion of a sterner, more self-relying, and enterprising

race to fully test its capabilities, and to astonish the world with its productiveness.

"The virgin soil of Cuba is so rich that a touch of the hoe prepares it for the plant. So fertile a soil is not known to exist in any other portion of the globe. It sometimes produces three crops to the year, and, in ordinary seasons, two may be relied upon."—*Ballow's History of Cuba*.

It is said that a mixture of the three kinds of soil by which the island is covered forms the richest fertilizer, next to guano, known in agriculture.

With its present limited population and inadequate cultivation, its productions are immense, having been in 1855, according to the report of the American consul, as follows:

Sugar.....	\$36,000,000
Coffee.....	1,000,000
Molasses.....	2,400,000
Minerals.....	2,500,000
Wax and honey.....	1,000,000
Rum.....	1,000,000
Tobacco and cigars.....	32,000,000
Fruits, &c.....	2,000,000
Total.....	\$77,900,000

As might be supposed, the commerce resulting from those rich productions is very large, though not nearly so great as it would be if relieved from onerous burdens and restrictions. The following table, compiled from official sources, exhibits the exports and imports for the year 1854:

	Exports.	Imports.
Spain.....	\$3,615,692	\$9,057,428
United States.....	11,641,813	7,867,680
England.....	11,119,526	6,610,909
All other nations.....	6,306,700	7,858,561
Total.....	\$32,683,731	\$31,394,578

Exportable domestic produce is the basis of all commerce. The amount of such produce possessed by any people measures their commercial capability; or, in other words, their purchases in a series of years will about equal their ability to pay. Any commerce beyond that must be unsound as involving the country in debt, or positively detrimental as making drafts on its accumulated capital to pay balances. Taking the exports as the measure of commercial capacity, Cuba has, in proportion to its population, nearly three-fold that of the United States. With an estimated population of twenty-eight million, the United States exported, in the year 1858, \$293,758,279 of domestic produce, being \$10 49 per head; whilst Cuba, in 1854, exported \$27 23 per head. The fact that a total population of one million two hundred thousand, of all classes, paying a tax of \$23,000,000 to Spain, and without any of the encouragement or protection derived from good government, can exhibit such results from their rude and untutored industry, will speak volumes to the commercial inquirer, and needs no comment.

Determined to confine themselves to incontrovertible facts, the committee have been obliged to go back to 1854, in order to obtain official information. In the four years that have since elapsed, great progress has been made in the island; and it is not doubted that twenty-five per cent. must be added to these results, to represent

the wealth and commerce of the present time. In addition to which, all writers agree that the official reports from their custom-houses are twenty-five per cent. under the truth.

We cannot hope that we have been able to present all the material facts bearing upon this point. Indeed, the jealousy of the Spanish Government sedulously conceals much that would throw light upon the subject. But the few prominent facts that we have mentioned, will show, beyond doubt, that to the commercial classes of the United States the acquisition of the island is of inestimable importance.

Ours is a Government dependent on the consent of the governed, and resting for its basis upon the affections of its citizens. If the arm of power is felt, it is in repressing vice and maintaining order. If there is, throughout the broad limits of the Republic, one citizen who looks with malevolence upon the Constitution under which he lives, he is spurned by the good, but fears no persecution. *Haud invitis*, and ought to be, our maxim, in extending our institutions over organized communities. It would accord neither with our principles nor our practice to take into the Union any territory already fully occupied by a civilized people averse to our Constitution. It becomes important, then, to inquire whether the people of Cuba would probably desire annexation to the Union.

On this point we can have no direct assurances, for the slightest whisper of discontent would probably bring down upon their heads the wrath of the Government under which they live.

A well-informed historian thus sums up the oppressions under which they groan:

"She is permitted no voice in the Cortes; the press is under the vilest censorship; farmers are compelled to pay ten per cent. on all their harvest, except sugar, and on that article two and a half per cent.; the island has been under martial law since 1825; over twenty-three millions of dollars taxes (about four hundred dollars to each family) are levied upon the inhabitants, to be squandered by Spain; flour is so taxed as to be inadmissible; the natives of the island are excluded entirely from the army, the judiciary, the treasury, and the customs; letters passing through the post are opened and purged of their contents before delivery; planters are forbidden to send their sons to the United States for educational purposes; in short, every possible subterfuge is resorted to by the Government officials to swindle the people, everything being taxed, and there is no appeal from the Captain General."

Many of the oppressions enumerated are omitted for brevity.

To these grievances are to be added the terrible threat constantly held over them by the minions of the Government, that, on the least appearance of disaffection or rebellion, the shackles will be stricken from the slave population of the island, and half a million of African savages will be turned loose to deluge their hearths in blood and desolate the island. Threats of spoliation and visions of carnage hang like a thunderbolt over their heads.

If the thirty thousand resident Spaniards, who are allowed to monopolize the honors and emoluments of Government, and to domineer over the island in the very wantonness of unrestrained power, should object to any change, it would not be surprising. The same class of persons inter-

posed the same kind of objection to the cession of Florida, where their exactions were not nearly so great, nor their privileges so lucrative, as they are in Cuba. As was done in the case of Florida, there could be reserved to them by the treaty the privilege to leave before the flag of the Republic is raised on the island.

To the five hundred and twenty thousand native white population the question presented is totally different. To them it is a question of emancipation from thralldom, freedom from exactions and oppression, elevation from political servitude to political freedom, escape from the most irresponsible despotism to be invested with the full powers of self-governing freemen. From being a colony, governed by laws in the making of which they have no voice, and the local administration of which is in the hands of a class having no sympathy with them, they would become an equal in a Confederacy of States, governing themselves in all local affairs, and through their Senators and Representatives in Congress participating in the conduct of the Federal Union, whilst enjoying its protection and sharing in its glories. Under the liberal commercial system which prevails in our Union, and which has so wonderfully developed the industry and wealth of the nation, the citizens of Cuba might reasonably expect to attain to a degree of wealth, civilization, and power which has never been reached by any people living under a political despotism.

To suppose them insensible to these advantages is to attribute to them an obtuseness most variant from all the accounts we have of them; and to suppose that, being sensible of them, they would not eagerly embrace an opportunity to become a State of the Union, would be to deny the existence in them of the motives and aspirations which have been found to impel other branches of the human family.

Our object in pointing out the material advantages that would result to our own citizens from the acquisition of Cuba has not been to excite their cupidity, nor to encourage unlawful enterprises for its seizure. As such a prize could only be paid for out of the common Treasury, so must its acquisition, whether by purchase or force, be by the constituted authorities acting in obedience to law. Our purpose is to show, that whilst political advantages and national security are the objects at which we aim, the pecuniary gains would be such that we can afford to pay to Spain a liberal price for its transfer. Though it has been an object of solicitude to our Government and people for many years, it is believed that no distinct offer has ever been made to the Spanish Government for its purchase. In the opinion of the committee, the time has arrived when such an offer should be made, in such terms as may seem to the President, who is charged by the Constitution with the duty of negotiating treaties, best calculated to arrest the serious attention of the Spanish Government.

The committee are aware that some who admit the force of all that is said in favor of the acquisition, and who would not purposely throw obstacles in the way of its attainment, doubt the pro-

priety of any action at this time, because, as they allege, the attempt to procure the assent of Spain will be futile.

The committee cannot recognize the force of this objection.

The President, in his annual message to Congress, said:

"The publicity which has been given to our former negotiations upon this subject, and the large appropriation which may be required to effect the purpose, render it expedient, before making another attempt to renew the negotiation, that I should lay the whole subject before Congress. This is especially necessary, as it may become indispensable to success that I should be intrusted with the means of making an advance to the Spanish Government immediately after the signing of the treaty, without awaiting the ratification of it by the Senate."

In his special message of January 21, he again calls the attention of Congress to the subject, and declares that he deems "it highly important, if not indispensable, to the success of any negotiation which I [he] might institute for the purpose, that the measure should receive the previous sanction of Congress."

He alone, has the means of obtaining official information as to the disposition of the Spanish Government, and it is not to be presumed that this recommendation is made, and reiterated to Congress without a sufficient motive. A failure on the part of the national Legislature to respond to the Executive recommendation will be attributed by Spain, however improperly, to opposition or indifference to the object, and will tend much to render futile an attempt at negotiation. Since the subject has been so prominently presented by the President, omission to act would be regarded by her as little less expressive than positive dissent from his views.

The committee hope that circumstances may never occur rendering it incumbent on the United States, "under the imperative and overruling law of self-preservation," to take possession of the island without the consent of Spain; but if they should, summary measures could be much more easily justified if we are prepared to show that we have exhausted honorable negotiation in attempts to avert the necessity; and had offered to Spain an equivalent in exchange for it. As such an offer might be necessary to the complete vindication of this Government hereafter, we ought not to be deterred from making it by any supposed unwillingness on the part of Spain to accept it, or even to entertain it in an amicable spirit.

Approving the recommendation of the President, and entertaining the belief that, by a failure to act, Congress would take upon itself a grave responsibility, the committee herewith report back the bill referred to it by the House: "A bill appropriating money to enable the President to settle unadjusted differences with the Government of Spain, and for other purposes," with an amendment to strike out "one," wherever it occurs, and insert "thirty;" and recommend its passage.

The bill is, in effect, similar to the act entitled "An act making further provision for the expenses attending the intercourse between the

United States and foreign nations," passed 26th of February, 1804, to enable Mr. Jefferson to negotiate a treaty for Louisiana; and to "An act making further appropriation to bring the existing war with Mexico to a speedy and honorable conclusion," passed March 3, 1847.

The sum named in the bill is proposed to be appropriated for no secret or disguised purpose, but to enable the President to make a payment to the Spanish Government, on the full ratification of the treaty by it, without waiting for its ratification by the Senate of the United States, and the appropriation of the money by Congress; it being supposed that a contingency might arise in which the ability to make such prompt payment would tend to bring negotiations to a successful issue. Nor is intended to limit the amount which the President may engage to pay for the adjustment of our differences with Spain, including the cession of Cuba. This and all other details of the treaty, if a treaty can be negotiated, are left to be arranged and its execution provided for in the manner prescribed by the Constitution and laws.

A statement of the duties, taxes, &c., collected annually in the Island of Cuba, without taking into consideration the large amount of goods smuggled through the custom-house with the connivance of the officers thereof.—(Report of the American consul to the State Department.)

Import and export duties, together with a charge of five per cent. (<i>alcabala</i>) on all recorded sales of real estate and negroes	\$13,566,302
Income from the royal lottery	1,559,000
Income from the post office	1,200,000
Income from the <i>diezmo</i> duty, the tenth part of the agricultural products, farmed out for	600,000
Church fees for marriages, funerals, christenings, &c.	250,000
Stamp duties	250,000
City taxes upon carriages, horses, negroes, &c.	300,000
Courts of law	1,000,000
Expenses of street lighting, fire engines, and watchmen, for Havana alone	161,600
Passports and licenses	1,000,000
Interest upon securities belonging to the church, Sales of " <i>oficios</i> ," a church impost	10,000
Fines, (incomplete)	8,000
Signature of Captain General in law suits alone, A tax of 18½ cents upon every description of animals offered for sale in the market places or otherwise, for the clothing of the militia	100,000
Income from legacies left for this purpose to bishops and other church dignitaries	40,000
Tax upon foreigners coming to the island to reside	10,000
Taxes upon vessels for pilots, captains of the port, and for discharging ballast	150,000
Mariners' fund, raised by a tax of 18½ cents on each trip of every mariner in the coasting trade	30,000
Total	\$24,259,902

BILL ACCOMPANYING THE REPORT.

Be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the sum of \$1,000,000 be, and the same is hereby, appropriated, out of any money not otherwise appropriated, to enable the President to conclude with the Government of Spain a treaty of amity, and for the settlement of all differences, including the cession of the Island of Cuba: to be used by him, if he shall think fit, in advance of the ratification of the treaty by the Senate: Provided, said treaty, when signed by the authorized agents of the two Governments, and duly ratified by the Government of Spain, shall call for

the expenditure of the same or any part thereof; full and accurate accounts of which expenditure shall be by him transmitted to Congress at as early a day as practicable.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That if, at the time said payments shall be required to be made, there shall not be in the Treasury sufficient funds not otherwise appropriated, the President of the United States is hereby authorized to borrow so much as may be necessary, not to exceed the sum of \$1,000,000, in the same manner and on the same terms and conditions as were prescribed by an act entitled "An act to authorize a loan not exceeding the sum of \$20,000,000," approved 14th June, 1858.

AMENDMENT.

Strike out "\$1,000,000" and insert "\$30,000,000."

NOTE.—Since the publication of this report, Hon. MILES TAYLOR and Hon. GEORGE EUSTIS, Representatives from Louisiana, have called in question the statement as to the quantity of sugar

produced in that State in 1857. The authority for the statement was given in the report—Homans's Cyclopedia of Commerce. Any person who will consult that work, page 1774, will find the statement sustained by the authority.

The draughtsman of the report is rejoiced to find that Homans is in error, and that the production of Louisiana, in 1857, was (counting one thousand pounds to the hoghead) two hundred and seventy-nine million six hundred and ninety-seven thousand pounds.

That was, however, considerably less than half the consumption, and the argument of the report remains unrefuted—that "the increase of production has not kept pace with the increase of consumption," and "that Louisiana cannot supply our wants, and must prepare for the free importation of sugar from other quarters."

